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ABSTRACT

This packet contains three papers on gender identity; power and influence styles in program planning; and white male backlash from a symposium on human resource development (HRD). The first paper, "Identification of Power and Influence Styles in Program Planning Practice" (Baiyin Yang), explores the relationship between HRD practitioners using different styles of power and influence tactics in designing and planning programs and organizational political contexts. Power and influence styles identified through cluster analysis included shotgun, tactician, ingratiator, and bystander. The second paper, "Gender Consciousness Development: A Critical Literature Review" (Laura L. Bierema, Jessica T. Kovan), is a critical review of the literature conducted to understand the empirical and theoretical underpinnings of gender consciousness development in a work context. The review found key themes in the literature related to the development of awareness, including identity, social context, and the learning process, but reported that there is not a cohesive body of literature on gender consciousness. The final paper, "White Male Backlash: Practitioner Perspectives on the Phenomenon" (Martin B. Kormanik), posits that white male backlash has emerged as an American social phenomenon. Although there is little research on this issue, a survey administered to a purposeful sample of 76 HRD practitioners generated quantitative and qualitative data on the phenomenon. The papers contain reference sections. (KC)

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2000 AHRD Conference

Identity, Influence, and Politics

Symposium 7

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CE 080 104

Identification of Power and Influence Styles in Program Planning Practice

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This study explores the relationship between HRD practitioners using different styles of power and influence tactics in designing and planning programs and organizational political contexts. Power and influence styles were identified through cluster analysis: Shotgun, Tactician, Ingratiator, and Bystander. Bystanders had moderate power based but scored highest on the measure of conflicting. Tacticians had relative lower power base and perceived moderate high conflicting. Ingratiators possessed highest power base but faced lowest conflict. Finally, Shotguns had relative low power base and perceived quite high conflict in the planing situation.

Keywords: Program Planning, Politics in Organizations, Power and Influence Styles

The purpose of this study is (1) to identify power and influence styles used by HRD practitioners in the practice of designing and planning education and training programs; and (2) to explore the relationship between power and influence styles and organizational political contexts in adult education program planning practice. Both popular writers about power and politics and theorists reasoned that individuals typically use a variety of influence styles in exercising power in their interactions with others. Several instruments have been developed to measure power and influence behaviors in organizations. They include Profile of Organizational Influence Strategies (POIS) by Kipnis, Schmidt, and Wilkinson (1980), Influence Behavior Questionnaire (IBO) by Yukl, Lepsinger and Lucia (1992), and Power and Influence Tactics Scale (POINTS) by Yang, Cervero, Valentine, and Benson (1998). Unfortunately, very few studies have been designed to identify empirically the mixes of power and influence tactics and their relation to organizational political contexts.

The process of designing and planning educational and training programs has been long conceptualized as a rational procedure, which normally starts from assessing training needs, setting learning objectives, to organizing learning contents and activities and ends with evaluating learning outcomes. Nevertheless, the practice of program planning rarely follows a linear progression as assumed by linear thinking (Brookfield, 1986; Cervero & Wilson, 1994; Pennington & Green, 1976). Cervero and Wilson (1994) conducted three case studies and found that power and interests are central to program planning. They maintain that "planning is essentially a social activity in which educators negotiate with others in answering questions about a program's form, including its purposes, content, audience, and format" (p. 28). They further proposed a negotiation theory of program planning. The underlying assumption of this theory is that educational program planning is a social activity, and the planner's action is contingent upon the social and organizational contexts in which the program is shaped. Consequently, any adequate theorizing of program planning practice should take into account the social setting, and it should be able to explain practitioners' planning behavior in the face of power. Human resource development researchers and practitioners have to understand that power and interests are involved in any HRD program. This is because ignoring political realities can be fatal to a program and even to the person who is responsible for the program. Unfortunately, little is known about how the HRD practitioners exercise their power and influence in their daily practice. In particular, there is a need to identify different styles of power and influence and their relationship with political contexts.

Theoretical Framework and Related Literature

According to Cervero and Wilson (1994), adult education program planning is a process of constructing educational programs and reconstructing power relationships and personal and organizational interests. A number of recent studies have shown the supporting evidence that adult education program planning is essentially a social process where politics matters (Cervero & Wilson, 1996; Yang et al., 1998). Yang et al. proposed a model of adult education program planning that specifies seven power and influence tactics in relationship with organizational political contexts. These seven tactics are: Reasoning, Networking, Appealing, Networking, Bargaining, Pressuring,

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and Counteracting. They further developed an instrument that measures power and influence tactics in adult education program planning practice.

Few studies have been conducted to examine power and influence styles in organizational political process. These studies typically use cluster analysis technique to identify groups of individuals who use their influence tactics similarly. In a pioneering study, Perreault and Miles (1978) identified five groups of influencers. The first group consisted of individuals who used multiple influence strategies. The second group consisted of individuals who used their expert knowledge as a basis for influencing others. The third group consisted of individuals who used friendly tactics. The fourth group comprised individuals who used their positions in the organization. The fifth group consisted of those who did not use influence of any kind.

By using hierarchical cluster analysis of six organizational influence strategies, Kipnis and Schmidt (1983) identified three styles that characterized the way managers influence subordinates. "Shotgun" managers used the most influence and emphasized assertiveness and bargaining; "Tactician" managers used an average amount of influence and emphasized reason; and "Bystander" managers used little influence. In a subsequent study of upward influence styles, however, Kipnis and Schmidt (1988) classified four groups of individuals. "Shotgun" individuals scored high on all six influence strategies scales, particularly assertiveness; "Ingratiator" individuals used an average amount of influence and emphasized friendliness; "Tactician" individuals scored high on the reason strategy and had average scores on the other influence strategies; and "Bystander" individuals has low scores on all of the influence strategies.

Although the previous studies on power and influence styles are enlightening, they failed to offer a conclusive identification of similar influence behaviors. Different studies have offered different numbers of meaningful clusters. In other words, we are not clear the types of political participants in organizational dynamics. Moreover, none investigated the relationship between power and influence styles and the political contexts.

Research Questions

Two research questions guided this study: (1) what is the meaningful classification of power and influence styles used by HRD practitioners in the practice of program planning? and (2) what is the relationship between the power and influence styles program planning and organizational political contexts such as power and conflict of interests?

Research Design

Participants

The study was originally designed to develop and validate an instrument measuring power and influence tactics in adult education program planning practice (Yang et al., 1998). A total number of 226 adult educators responded to a survey in the validation study served as the subjects for this study. Four clusters from a purposive sample were used to obtain the data. Members of four professional associations participated in the study: members of Georgia Adult Education Association, Academy of Human Resource Development, Georgia Association of Association Executives, and the Georgia Society for Healthcare Education and Training. For each of the four organizations, the membership list was sought and an adjusted response rate of 23% was achieved.

Measurement

The participants were asked to recall a recent adult education or training program they involved and to indicate the effectiveness of different power and influence behaviors. The power and influence behaviors were measured in seven constructs: *Reasoning* (with 5 items and reliability coefficient alpha of .81), *Consulting* (4 items and alpha = .82), *Appealing* (5 items and alpha = .73), *Networking* (4 items and alpha = .74), *Bargaining* (4 items and alpha = .78), *Pressuring* (5 items and alpha = .63), and *Counteracting* (4 items and alpha = .68). Two organizational contextual variables were also assessed: planner's *Conflicting Interests* (5 items and alpha = .76) and *Power Base* (3 items and alpha = .81). Here the *Power Base* was defined and measured according to French and Raven's (1959) conceptualization of five interpersonal bases of power: legitimate, reward, coercive, expert, and referent. The *Conflicting Interests* was measured as the planner's perception of the degree of conflicting between the planner and one of the most interacted person with regard to the program.

Several demographic variables were also included in the study, including age, gender, years working as an education or training professional, years working in the current organization and years working in the current position in the organization.

Data Analysis

The data analysis was performed in accordance with research questions. First, to identify the power and influence styles the data were submitted to the SPSS cluster analysis procedure based on seven attribute variables (power and influence behaviors measured on seven dimensions in the POINTS). The seven attribute variables were standardized and the cluster analysis was implemented based on z-scores. Second, means of two political contextual variables (i.e., *Power Base* and *Conflicting*) were calculated for each type of program planner based on the cluster solution in the previous stage.

Findings and Conclusions

Numerous cluster solutions (different cluster methods provided by SPSS with 3, 4, 5 and 6 cluster solutions) were requested and examined. Considerations in selecting a final solution were given to statistical properties and the classifications revealed in the literature. Ultimately, a four-cluster solution was selected as it suggested most interpretable results and similar pattern discovered by Kipnis and Shmidt (1988). These four clusters were named *Bystander* (N = 18), *Tactician* (N = 72), *Ingratiator* (N = 82), and *Shotgun* (N=54) respectively. Figure1 illustrates how planners in each of these four clusters scored in their use of seven power and influence tactics. Figure 1 is based on computations of planning behaviors' corresponding z-score.

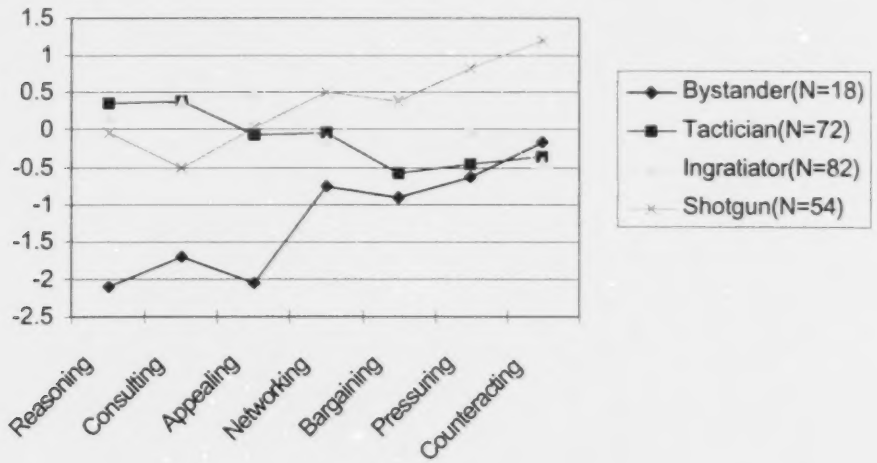

Figure 1. Use of power and influence tactics by four types of program planners.

The patterns of power and influence styles were similar to those revealed in the previous study (Kipnis & Schmidt,1988). Cluster one corresponded to the previously identified *Bystander* style. These program planners had very low scores, compared with other groups, on most power and influence tactics except *Counteracting*. Their scores on the tactics of *Counteracting* were about average. So the *Bystanders* were very passive in the organizational political process while they might occasionally counteract the actions of others. They had extreme low scores on some rational strategies such as *Reasoning*, *Consulting* and *Appealing* (two SDs below the means), suggesting that the rational strategies were really not the options for them.

Cluster two was named as *Tactician*. This group of the influencers scored high on two rational strategies (*Reasoning* and *Consulting*) and had average scores on the other power strategies. They had relative low score on

Bargaining tactics. Consequently, the power and influence style of this group suggested that *Tacticians* might have clear objectives to achieve and therefore they viewed rational strategies more effective.

Cluster three corresponded to *Ingratiator*. This group of the planners scored high on *Appealing* and *Bargaining* and had average scores on the remaining influence tactics. *Ingratiator* viewed friendly and interpersonal strategies as effective means in the interaction with others.

Cluster four planners scored high on four competitive tactics (*Networking*, *Bargaining*, *Pressuring*, and *Counteracting*), particularly on *Pressuring* and *Counteracting*. They had average scores on three accommodating tactics (*Reasoning*, *Consulting* and *Appealing*). The power and influence style of this cluster showed a nonjudicious use of offensive strategies. Thus this cluster was named as *Shotgun*.

Overall, the pattern of power and influence styles identified in this study was similar to that revealed by Kipnis et al. (1988). Consequently, the classification of power and influence styles identified by Kipnis et al. (1988) has been confirmed. It was then concluded that at least four power and influence styles could be recognized from the planners of educational and training programs.

The relationship between power and influence styles and the political contexts was examined by plotting the scores on *Power Base* and *Conflict* for each of the clusters revealed in the cluster analysis. Figure 2 presents this relationship by showing the standardized scores for each of the clusters. The means of power based and conflict for the four clusters of planners suggested they faced different political contexts. *Bystanders* had moderate power base but scored highest on conflict. Their scores on seven power and influence tactics showed that they did not want to be players in the organizational politics. Although this group of the planners had moderate power base, they were escaping from the organizational politics probably due to the situation of high conflict. Tacticians had relative lower power base and perceived moderate high conflict. This finding confirmed Kipnis and Schmidt's (1980) that tactician's power base resided in their performance of nonroutine work. The most viable strategy for them was to use rational tactics to justify their work and consequently to gain the influence. *Ingratiators* possessed highest power base but faced lowest conflict. This fact explained why they did not view two combative tactics (i.e., *Pressuring* and *Counteracting*) as effective ones. This finding also confirmed Yukl et al.'s notion that today's leader had to use a variety of appealing strategies to get the job done. Finally, *Shotguns* had relative low power base and perceived quite high conflict in the planing situation. This group of the planners were relative aggressive probably due the planning situation they faced. They had to be active politics players in order to protect their perceived interests and gain certain power.

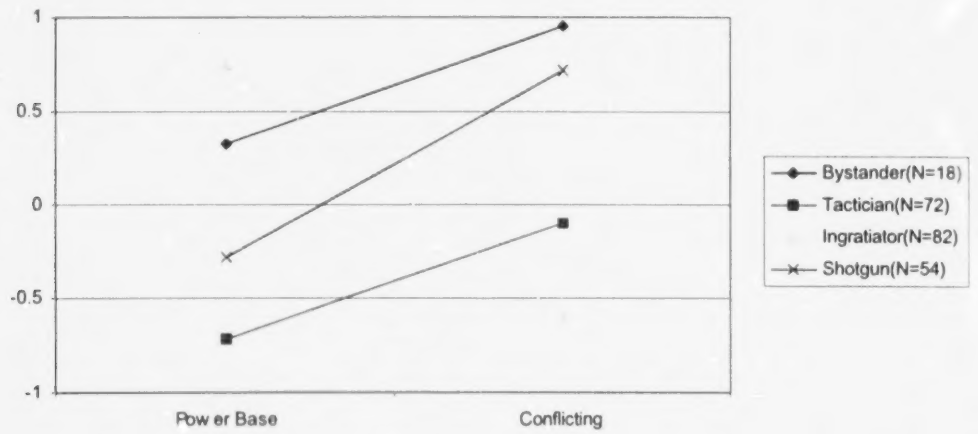

Figure 2. Relationship between power and influence styles and the political contexts

In order to find the relationship between power and influence style and personal characteristics, these measured demographic variables were examined across four clusters of planners and appropriate tests (χ^2 or F) were conducted. As it was shown in Table 1, no significant differences was found among four clusters of program planners in terms of the percent of female, years of educational experiences, years in the organization, and years in the current position. In other words, power and influence style is not found to significantly relate to the program planners' gender, years of educational experiences, years in the organization, and years in the current position. Major demographic variables have not been found to impact planners'choice of influence strategy.

Table 1
Personal characteristics of four Clusters of Program Planners

Characteristics	Bystander	Tactician	Ingratiator	Shotgun	Test of Difference
Percent of female	14.4%	37.4%	23.7%	24.5%	$\chi^2(3) = 2.5$(n.s.)
Age	48.30	46.17	45.28	46.35	F = .60 (n.s.)
Years of Educational Experience	17.25	16.40	16.68	16.34	F = .28 (n.s.)
Years in the Organization	9.17	8.06	9.49	9.20	F = .74 (n.s.)
Years in the Current Position	5.69	4.51	5.72	5.55	F = 1.21 (n.s.)

Implications

This study confirms previous research findings that at least four distinct power and influence styles can be identified from organizational political process. It revealed that power and influence styles significantly relate to organizational contexts. It also suggests that planners' personal characteristics such as age, gender and years of working experience do not have significant impacts on their choice of influence styles. This study has both theoretical and practical implications.

The process of designing and planning educational and training programs has long been conceptualized as a technical process while politics has been viewed as noise. This notion implies that program planners should avoid politics and focus on some technical areas such as needs assessment and evaluation. Recent proposed theory of program planning challenges such notion and posits that educators should pay attention to organizational politics (Cervero & Wilson, 1994, 1996). This empirical study supports the recent theorization of program planning and confirms that planning behaviors have significant relationship with organizational contextual variables. Specifically, planners'power base and perceived conflict are the determinants of their interpersonal influence tactics in the program planning practice. Consequently, effective educators should be aware of the organizational politics. Adequate theory and model for designing and planning programs should take into account of organizational politics. More research and theorization are needed to investigate different impacts of politics and planners'strategies on the program outcomes. This study makes a contribution to the literature by identifying meaningful classification of program planners based on power and influence tactics. The classification of program planners revealed in this study provides a parsimonious framework for understanding different tyles of program planners.

Although the classification of power and influence styles in this study has been found to be consistent with previous classification in the literature, some findings of this study remain uncertainty. The results of this study suggested there was no significant relationship between power and influence styles and personal charateristics such as gender. Literature has revealed mixed findings about this relationship. Drory and Beaty (1991) reported that males and females had different perceptions about power and influence tactics. It was discovered that males were more tolerant of political behavior than females and that both men and women view political manipulations of their own sex more favorably than those of the opposite sex. However Vecchio and Sussmann (1991) reported that there was no gender differences in their exercise of power except that female managers preferred to use coalition formation. More studies are needed to examine the impacts of personal characteristics on the exercise of power and influence.

This classification also provides a useful analytical tool for the practitioners to examine their own planning practice. For example, *Bystanders* had low scores on most of the influence behaviors. Although this group of the planners had moderate power base, they were escaping from the organizational politics probably due to the situation of high conflicting. This group of the planners might want to reflect their practice and consider other effective influence behaviors to get the job done. They had very low scores on three rational strategies (*Reasoning*, *Consulting* and *Appealing*) and scored average on *Counteracting*. It therfore can be reasoned that their power and influence tactics were not effective. They should consider using these rational strategies and make their political actions more constructive and effective.

Shotgun individuals faced the similar political situation as the *Bystanders* as they had moderate power base but encountered relative high conflict. Instead of avoiding conflict and escaping from the politics, as what *Bystanders* did, *Shotgun* planners favored these hostile strategies such as *Pressuring* and *Counteracting*. It would be difficult to assess the effectiveness of these power and influence tactics, but it can be reasoned that these tactics were not constructive for the educational and training program itself. Maybe the *Shotgun* planers had been pushed to act in this way by the organizational politics. *Shotgun* individuals should be aware of the destructive nature of their actions. This group of planners definitely needs to constantly evaluate their planning strategies and do not rely on some of the destructive interpersonal influences.

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Gender Consciousness Development: A Critical Literature Review

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A critical review of the literature was conducted to understand the empirical and theoretical underpinnings of gender consciousness development in work context. Key themes in the literature related to the development of gender awareness include identity, social context, and the learning process. There is not a cohesive body of literature on gender consciousness development and we conclude that more research is needed in this area.

Keywords: Gender Consciousness Development, Women's Career Development, Learning

Research on career women has shown that some women exhibit low levels of gender awareness when reflecting on their career experiences (Bierema, 1994, 1996, 1999; Caffarella, Clark, and Ingram, 1997). Women in these studies report experiencing gender based hardship, discrimination, and harassment. Yet, often these women do not attribute their experience to gender, even when asked directly. Further, these women generally do not view themselves as feminists, some almost blanching at the word. Rather, they break through the glass ceiling by "playing by the rules," ignoring sexual harassment, tolerating exclusion from the men's network, and accepting less qualified men being promoted over them. Moreover, some of these women continue to follow a non-critical stance toward the patriarchal organization *after* achieving power and success.

There is a need to explore how knowledge is created about gender in the workplace, particularly as the numbers of women in positions of power increases. Marshall's (1995) critical review of research on gender and management concluded that although wide-ranging, gender management is not a particularly coherent field. Reasons for this include the complexity of researching gender, and the assumptions surrounding gender issues. Marshall also contends that gender research is marginalized and unacknowledged in mainstream theorizing. Greenglass & Marshall (1993) observe that literature on women managers in psychology has been relatively absent, and attribute this deficiency to a predominance of positivist research in psychology at the expense of methods that would provide better insight to women managers in context such as qualitative, interpretive approaches.

The unexamined assumptions that contribute to the dynamics of society also complicate an understanding of gender in the workplace. Wellington (1996) in a speech to the Economic Club of Detroit explains, "Let me be clear, I believe that most obstacles to women's advancement to the top are not intentional, they are the result of unexamined assumptions about women's career interests and of policies and practices that have existed unquestioned over time in the corporate culture. With real commitment to change, the situation is remediable" (p.149). Meyerson and Fletcher (2000) argue that gender discrimination is embedded so deeply in organizational life that it is barely discernable to men and women. They note that, "gender inequity is rooted in our cultural patterns and therefore in our organizational systems" (p. 131). These unexamined assumptions make gender consciousness difficult to study, as it is not something that is thought of on a daily basis.

There are many calls for research on women in work context, but few published studies. MacRae advocates for more research on women's identity. She suggests that women's identity has been conceptualized in terms of formal roles in the paid work arena dominated by male experience. Women's informal roles in the realm of female experience, such as relationships and caregiving, have been ignored. Caffarella & Olson (1993) call for more data-based studies to develop the ideas, concepts, models, and theories about women's development. They ask: "How would raising the consciousness of women about the 'glass ceiling' for women in organizations affect their life dreams and what they believe they can achieve?" (p.145). Marshall (1995) writes, "I think it is a significant theoretical and practical imperative to heighten awareness about, and challenge, processes which limit the scope of the gender and management field" (p. S54). Finally, Greenglass and Marshall (1993) suggest what is needed is "more study of the gender-related processes that affect management recruitment and operation. . . . We also need more complex models of social and organisational change processes to inform this field of study [women in management]" (p.287).

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The purpose of this inquiry is to critically review literature related to the process of women's development of gender consciousness in work context. The theoretical frames underlying this study fall into two main areas: Women's career development and learning. Though interest has increased in women's development and learning within the fields of adult learning and human resource development, there has been no published attempt to synthesize the research that exists concerning women's consciousness development in the work setting. Our goals are to present an in-depth description of this literature, identify common themes, and suggest implications for human resource development.

Research Design

We conducted a critical review of the literature to understand the theoretical and empirical aspects of gender consciousness development. As suggested by Daloz (1986), Hayes (1989), Merriam & Caffarella (1991), and Caffarella & Olson (1993), a number of development paradigms are necessary when thinking about adults as learners. In this vein, we explored a variety of literatures including: adult education, sociology, women's studies, management, human resource development, psychology and career development. We searched for published research on such key words as: gender consciousness, gender awareness, feminist consciousness raising, women's development, gender and management, and women's learning and development. After reviewing the articles, we thematically organized the literature.

To begin the review, a clear definition of gender was necessary. The term 'gender' in the past has primarily referred to the social expectations and roles attributed to or experienced by people based on their biological sex (Marshall, 1995). The term today, however, has taken on a much broader and more diffuse set of meanings. Marshall argues, "It has become a general label for talking about women, men, the relationships between them, related aspects of organizing, processes through which gender differentiated behaviour patterns are enacted and associated issues of power in various guises" (p. S53). In synthesizing the literature on gender consciousness, we focus on the relational process between women and men. Our interest is in how people create knowledge about this process in the work context.

We bring to this study the assumption that both knowledge creation and gender consciousness are mulitlayered, multifaceted processes. Giesbrecht (1998) notes that the "sense of identity is multi-faceted and encompasses both a personal self-worth component and a 'self in social relationship' component" (p.476). Kegan (1994) suggests that the conditions in the world combine with the developmental forces in the individual to provide the backdrop upon which meaning-making occurs. Merriam and Caffarella's (1993, 1999) tripartite framework of adult learning suggests that adult learning occurs on three levels: the learner, the context and the learning process. This framework provides a natural bridge to viewing the literature in this manner, hence lending a systemic approach to interpreting our findings.

Findings

The literature was thematically organized around three main findings. First, identity is socially constructed. Second, the review clearly pointed out that the context where learning about gender takes place is dynamic, affected by organizational culture and policy, and influenced by discourse. Third, the learning process seems to holds particular relevance for understanding how gender consciousness is achieved. The findings are categorized under these three tracks.

Gender Awareness and Identity

Many fields, such as sociology, have broadly conceptualized self in terms of multiple identities, with individuals holding perceptions of themselves in terms of traits and values, attributes, experiences, thoughts and action, physical appearance, demographic attributes, and dispositions of various sorts (Leonard, Beauvais & Scholl, 1999). A common theme throughout the reviewed literature is that gender is socially constructed and a part of human identity development that is based on life experience. Self identity has been found to be created through participating in work, private life, community and other social entities.

In a study of women's self-identity in later life, MacRae (1995) premises her work on the assumption that to understand identity, attention must be focused on the ways in which individuals participate in the social world, the totality of their experience, and their interpretation of that experience. De los Santos' (1989) research on high-

achieving, professional Mexican-American women also contributes the importance of understanding social class as an important factor shaping identity. MacRae distinguishes between social identity (others' perceptions of an individual) and "felt identity" referring to the self-meanings or perceptions. She treats felt identity synonymously with the concept of self-identity. This distinction is important when it comes to learning about gender in the workplace and understanding the diverse assumptions and perceptions at play.

Leonard, Beauvais and Scholl (1999) strongly note the "importance given to a particular role-specific identity is a function of an individual's social and emotional commitment to that role" (p. 979). Moore (1999) examined gender and occupational identities within the Israeli police force and found that women did not compromise their femininity even when their gender identity was not salient and when they worked in masculine organizations. Occupational identity appears to be more central than gender identity for both policemen and policewomen. In a study of senior management level women, Zane (1999) found that women began to place more importance on their identity as a women as their understanding of gender issues increased. Prior to gender awareness, she found that the senior women managers: (1) "believed their past success was linked to their competence and hard work;" (2) "identified with men and male-bureaucratic values such as individualism, meritocracy and equal opportunity;" and (3) "tended to avoid 'women's issues"' (p.17). Consequently, the question can be asked: What factors contribute to gender awareness being raised?

Gender Awareness and the Social World

Engagement with the social world also impacts the development of gender awareness. MacRae (1995) bases her research on women and caring on the assumption that 'to understand identity, attention must be focused on the way in which individuals participate in the social world . . . the totality of their experience and, most important, their interpretation of that experience" (p.148). She explains, "a broad conceptualization of identity which encompasses more than social statuses and roles, and which focuses on experience and the individual's relationship to society, is particularly relevant to the study of the nature and basis of woman's identity" (p.148). She contends that "human action takes place within a social structural context and, therefore, humans face numerous structural constraints as they negotiate their everyday world" (p.147).

Focusing specifically on the world of work, Greenglass and Marshall (1993) argue that women as managers "cannot be fully understood outside the socio-political context within which they are found" (p. 287). Geharardi (1994) took a symbolic approach to the study of organizational cultures and views the organization as a cultural artifact. Based on over 15 years of her organizational research and consulting, she concludes that humans are more adept at doing gender than producing knowledge about gender. Her thesis is that women's presence in the workplace breaks with the symbolic order of gender based on the separation of male/female, public/private, production/reproduction. Cassell and Walsh's (1997) findings add depth to G herardi's conclusions. They examined organizational culture and women's gender management strategies in context. They explored how women interpret organizational messages about appropriate behaviour at work, and how such interpretations affect women's everyday organizational behavior. Specific cultural expectations and rules regarding how women should behave were found, including six gender management strategies. These include : *overfunctioning* (working harder than male colleagues to achieve career success), *underfunctioning* (keeping a low profile and not publicizing career success), *flirtation*, *the mask* (withholding of personal information or construction an alternate image to compensate for not fitting in), *working behind the scenes* (looking after customers or things important to organization success but of little organization status), and *mothering or nurturing* (looking after male colleagues, asking about family and caring for others).

Howell, Carter and Schied (1999) explored the contradictions among critical feminist theory, HRD and reality of women's experiences in context of HRD programs in the workplace. They examined who controlled the goals, objective, and definitions of learning and work and for what purposes. In their critical ethnographic study, they found that organizations only allow positive, cheerful voices, not critical ones. HRD programs reinforce these discourses, with a tendency to be anti-feminist and anti-democratic. Feminist concept of voice were virtually absent in these corporate HRD programs. Organizational training and policy, hence, can transmits messages about how the organization regards women and how to behave in context. Peterson and Albrecht (1999) deconstructed a maternity leave policy to investigate ways gendered organizations may subtly but powerfully shape and define women's experience and ways of knowing and may reproduce hegemonic distinctions between male/female, and public/private life. They found that rather than being a benign, genderless text, HR policy— as the legally documented position of the organization— is a discursive site wherein gendered identities are produced and reproduced.

Gender Awareness and Learning

Although we have an incomplete understanding of the relationship between work, gender, and knowledge production, we conclude that gender consciousness development is achieved through the interaction of the individual in context. Developing gender awareness happens in a complex system and its aspects overlap and affect each other. Several themes emerged in the literature to describe the learning process related to gender awareness including life history and roles, relationships, otherness, and unlearning.

Life Experience and Roles Life experience and roles include, early family influence, social roles, socialization, and values. All of these interact to produce awareness about the world, including gender. Ruddick explains, "These relationships of gender are created in familial and social contexts that are marked by 'ethnicity,' 'race,' normative and often compulsory heterosexuality,' and economic and social 'class'— abstract labels that themselves signify emotion-laden connections and disconnections with parents, siblings, extended kin, peers, teachers, and with the 'world' in which these significant other s create and are (re)created" (1996, p. 263). Ruddick (1996) further explains that knowledge is embedded in personal history and psychological life and suggests that ways of knowing arise out of 'practices." Practices can be work or social roles (engineering, mothering) and through them learners acquire distinctive ways of thinking that are embedded in the practice. "It is within a practice, and in accordance with its aims, that people judge which questions are sensible, which 'methods' are suitable for addressing them, which answers are appropriate to them, and which criteria distinguish better or worse answers" (1996, p. 264). She also observes that practice-based knowing is gendered. Thus, learning about gender can occur in the practice of being a woman manager or executive. Reingold and Foust (1998), using data from the 1992 American National Election Study, created a model of feminist consciousness. Their model incorporates a variety of variables measuring ideological predisopositions in addition to variables measuring adult life circumstances and childhood and adult socialization. They conclude that women's feminist consciousness is in large part, a function of ideological predispositions— of basic sociopolitical values and beliefs. They found that neither direct personal experience with nontraditional gender roles nor exposure to nontraditional ideas and role models accounted for much variation in consciousness. This contradicts other researchers who insist that consciousness is related to viewing oneself as different from the dominant culture. Whether or not experience with gender roles has an impact is worthy of further study. In another study, De los Santos examined how 10, high-achieving, professional Mexican-American women negotiated the Mexican-American and Anglo cultures. She found that the women's early socialization determined how they experienced the dominant culture and that they used one of four patters to interact with the dominant culture including acculturation, irritation, adaptation, and rejection. Acculturators identify with the dominant society and do not shift between cultures. Irritants identify with Mexican-American values and see themselves in conflict with Anglo culture. They work within dominant culture to foster change. Adapters move between both cultures seeing them as distinct and isolated from one another. Rejectors succeed in dominant culture but reject it in favor of traditional values. Life history and roles help women create meaning about gender, and much of the meaning creation happens through their relationships.

Relationships Relationships are also instrumental in helping women achieve gender consciousness. Relationships help foster reflection, a sense of connection, and group consciousness. Daloz writes, "Emancipatory learning is not about *escape from* but rather about a deeper *immersion into* the rough-and-tumble of human relationship" (forthcoming, p.24). Gender consciousness development is also fostered through reflection, which occurred primarily through relationships in the literature reviewed. Daloz (forthcoming) points out that "for mature transformation to occur, at some point there must be conscious, critical reflection on our early assumptions about 'how life is'" (p.15). Defining and redefining identity occurs continuously and through this reflective cognitive process, individuals construct a set of personal standards (Leonard et al, 1999; Markus & Wurf, 1987). Dialogue and reflection were prevalent activities in for fostering gender awareness in the studies reviewed (Jones-Isley, 1999; MacRae, 1995; Zane, 1999).

Developing a sense of connection was important for achieving gender consciousness. MacRae (1995) found, in a study of elderly women, that the women tend to describe themselves in terms of their interpersonal relationships. Gilligan (1979) also argues that relationships and connectedness with others are of central importance to women's development and writes, "the female comes to know herself as she is known through her relationships with others" (p.437). Giesbrecht (1998) found through factor analysis that in the construction and negotiation of identity, "male perspectives emphasized instrumentality and female perspectives emphasized social connection" (p.7). Ruddick (1996) notes that the idea of a relational self or that humans are composed by the relationships in which they participate, helps explain how women become connected knowers. Humans begin learning from their earliest relationships. Ruddick writes, "This fundamental 'relationality,' as I will call it, precedes both knowing and gender. A knowing self, like other aspects of selfness, is created within relationship (p. 263). She explains further that as the knowing self is created through relationships, gender is also, simultaneously constructed. Caffarella & Olson (1993) note in their critical review of the literature on the psychosocial development of women that: "What surfaced as central to the developmental growth of women was the web of relationships and connectedness to others" (p.135).

Relationships helped women foster a sense of group awareness as Zane observes, "When women come together in groups, they are able to forge links between their own experience and that of others, especially those within their own racial and ethnic class group" (Zane, 1999, p.21). The process of becoming a feminist is regularly described by women (and men) as a process of transformation, a struggle to develop new interpretations of familiar realities (Collins, 1991). Collins (1991) notes that Black women's experiences stimulate a distinctive Black feminist consciousness. These common experiences lend to a distinctive group consciousness. The connection between experience and consciousness shapes the lives of all African-American women. Collins connects this consciousness to a self-defined collective standpoint. She notes that "a self-defined standpoint involves tapping sources of everyday, unarticulated consciousness that have traditionally been denigrated in white, male-controlled institutions" (p.26). The "interdependence of thought and action suggest that changes in thinking may be accompanied by changed actions and that altered experiences may in turn stimulate a changed consciousness" (Collins, 1991, p.28).

"Otherness" Gender consciousness depends upon understanding "otherness." Daloz (2000) describes "otherness" as a process of constructively engaging with the political and social consequences of perceiving yourself as "other" (and usually marginalized) from the dominant culture. U sing Nelson Mandela as an example, Daloz describes how during his life, Mandela gradually discovered that others were quite different from himself and regarded him as inferior. He was able to achieve this understanding only after was he relatively secure in his own identity. Mandela achieved an understanding of "otherness" on his own.

Recognizing "otherness" was a collective process for the women in the literature reviewed. Zane explains her findings, "It was only after being in the system for a number of years that some of the senior women began to notice the social and professional gaps between themselves and their male counterparts" (Zane, 1999, p.17). When the conversations among senior level women managers shift from individual gender issues to a more public arena, "there is a change from an individual orientation to a group-level discourse–their discussion links them as women" (Zane, 1999, p.18). Women's networks and organizations can accelerate gender awareness and Zane (1999) work with senior level female managers who came to realize their collective experiences notes, "Through the power of 'naming' their own experiences and then collectively identifying what they saw happening for other women in the organization, the women became convinced that there were multiple standards operating, debunking the myth of an individualistic, gender-neutral meritocracy" (1999, p.18). Ruddick (1996) calls groups of knowers "epistemological communities" and explains that these communities provide knowing that is collectively produced and held. She suggests that these epistemological communities engage in "gender discourse" which dichotomizes human characteristics and associates them with masculinity or femininity. Zane concludes, "Women become more conscious of their identity as women and their connection to women's issues when they have a forum for public conversation–"naming" themselves and the obstacles they confront in the process. When women have the opportunity to share their individual organizational experiences, the collective data provide a window into the systematic patterns within the organization. Learning that other women have similar problems enables them to see the world differently, and begin to see the processes by which their identities are negated and their affiliations illegitimatized. Their conversations help them overcome internalized negative images of themselves and other women, and serve as a springboard for strategizing new approaches to action" (Zane, 1999, pp.20-21).

Unlearning A theme of *unlearning* in the literature is prevalent concerning developing gender consciousness. Marshall (1995) notes that within the feminist contributions to the field of gender and management, a major theme has been that of emerging silence. Learning to become vocal, or what Piercy (1973, cited in Marshall,

1993) has termed 'unlearning to not speak ," is a process of gender awareness. Jones-Isley (1999) explored personal narratives of 12 self-proclaimed feminist (11 white, 1 Mexican-American) who started a women's center in a conservative Midwest town. Through narrative analysis she found that participants hold common threads of the pedagogies experience in formal and informal settings. One of their themes was unlearning of assumptions they held about themselves and others. Zane notes a process of budding awareness and unlearning in her research and writes, "as the women began to discuss the negative ways in which they and others were being treated, they started seeing patterns which raised serious questions about fairness and equity across genders... They also began to realize that what they had always assumed to be personality conflicts between individual women and their managers or their subordinates might be reflective of more generic problems for women in the organization"(Zane, 1999 p.17-18).

Discussion

First and foremost, we heartily conclude that there is a gap in the literature on the research and theory of gender consciousness development. We searched exhaustively and found few articles on this phenomenon. The articles we found lacked a systems perspective, which we believe is crucial to understanding the process of gender consciousness development. Our reviews show the overlapping nature of the elements that contribute to gender awareness and these processes must not be considered separately. Although the articles reviewed acknowledged the process of gender awareness, they did not identify factors either contributing to or inhibiting the learning process. We believe gender awareness is a process of transformative learning that may occur individually or collectively. What is not clear, however, is what events lead to transformation in consciousness? The literature provides little information about the learner herself and only a glimpse of how life experiences prior to work impact gender consciousness. There was no information on the emotional aspect of gender consciousness. Few empirical studies of this phenomenon exist as most of the studies are qualitative case studies. We found no explanation for why some people become aware, but others do not. Finally, although people achieve gender consciousness, how they use this knowledge is not discussed in the literature (such as educating others or taking action for change). All of these gaps are fertile ground for future research.

The literature corresponds with Merriam and Caffarella's (1999) configuration of the learner, context, and process, in that each of these themes was evident in the description of gender consciousness. Context was most often discussed, and we infer that this is because social, political, and economic realties are more visible than individual learner characteristics, experiences, and processes. Understanding the learner and the process is much more complicated and few studies address these aspects. We conclude from this review that reflective practice is critical to developing gender awareness, but the process and whether or how the learning is transformative remains to be illuminated through research. We've learned much about the observable elements of gender awareness, but believe there is much more to understand beneath the surface such as assumptions about self, identity, and context.

Daloz (forthcoming) examines the nature of transformative learning that occurs as a person develops a sense of social responsibility and outlines four conditions of transformation: presence of the other, reflective discourse, a mentoring community, and opportunities for committed action." We found evidence in the literature for otherness, reflection, and a community, although not necessarily one devoted to mentoring. We did not find evidence for how women take collective action based on gender awareness, other than in the feminist consciousness raising literature. Application of this awareness in work context was not discussed in the literature. We conclude that learning about gender is an ongoing process, although we are less clear how the learning takes form. This conclusion corresponds with Gherardi's (1994) observation that "doing gender" is easier than explaining it.

Interestingly, our conclusions parallel closely Taylor's (1997) critical review of the empirical studies of transformative learning theory. Taylor's review discloses that in understanding the learning process of transformative learning, a greater degree of recognition needs to be given to "the significant influence of context, the varying nature of the catalyst of the process, the minimization of the role of critical reflection and increased role of other ways of knowing and relationships, and an overall broadening of the definitional outcome of a perspective transformation" (p.34). With a slight change in wording, his recommendations could almost fit the needs for research on gender consciousness, hence suggesting close ties between gender consciousness development and transformative learning.

We conclude that learning about gender can happen individually or collectively. There were more studies in the literature that examined gender consciousness development in groups than individually. Daloz's observation that recognizing "otherness" is pivotal to developing awareness is a very important finding. A failure to regard oneself as "other" may be one explanation for why some senior level women in management do not see the differences in gender. The climb up the corporate ladder may have left them insecure in their own identity after

years of striving to conform to a male image. Future research should address how people learn to view themselves as "other" or different and how this knowledge informs their learning and action.

Finally, learning about gender often involves unlearning assumptions that women should emulate men, or that their experiences are valid. Unlearning tended to happen collectively for women in the literature which leads us to conclude that women's networks and organizations may be a significant vehicle for fostering gender awareness. Zane observes, "Affiliating as women is a contradictory notion in a male bureaucratic culture. In a male-dominated institution that promulgates individualism, merit and gender-neutrality, forming women's groups to challenge the distribution of organizational resources affronts the very assumptions on which the culture is based. The expectation is that women will act as neutered individual."(Zane, 1999, p.20).

Limitations of this Critical Review

This review has imperfections and our work is not finished. One of the limitations is that we reviewed literature from the for-profit world. There are many contexts where gender consciousness occurs, such as the public and non-profit sectors. These contexts need to be more fully investigated to understand how gender awareness occurs in them. Another limitation is that we did not find a definitive body of work related to our question, and this review is the was drawn from a number of disciplines and sources. Finally, we are both from the United States and are White, heterosexual women of privilege. Our positionality may have prevented us from seeing nuances in the literature, exploring certain search terms, and interpreting the findings to be inclusive of all women.

How this Research Contributes to New Knowledge in HRD

This critical review contributes to HRD through extending the literature on ways of knowing in work context. We attempted to take a systems approach to understanding this problem, and although the literature is not systematic, we are working to build a systems view of the development of gender consciousness. To that end, we are launching a study of this phenomenon and data collection is underway. While there is exhaustive literature on career development, far less attention has been paid to understanding the unique issues of women's career development. We have also found little literature on the learning processes related to gender consciousness development in work context and believe this research begins to address this void.

Marshall (1993) observes that gender research is marginalized. We agree and believe that not only is literature on this subject difficult to find, but also questions about gender do not often cross the radar screen of many researchers. We think more research must be done in this area and feel that this investigation validates our intention to study how gender awareness occurs among women. As Marshall advocates, researchers must ask the question: "*In what ways is gender important here?*" We believe that is a key starting point for future research in HRD. A metaphor that continually reminds us about the process of achieving gender consciousness in both life and research is that oftentimes we find ourselves in the middle of a tornado. When you are in the eye of the storm things may seem calm and inert, but in reality the world is being spun around you. Becoming aware of this reality takes openness, recognition of otherness, unlearning, and ultimately consciousness.

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White Male Backlash: Practitioner Perspectives on the Phenomenon

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White male backlash (WMB) has emerged as an American social phenomenon. Although there has been coverage of WMB in the popular press, it has not been adequately studied through empirical research. Specifically, there is a paucity of research describing WMB or identifying its impact on the contemporary workplace. A survey administered to a purposeful sample of practitioners generated quantitative and qualitative data on the phenomenon. Implications for practitioners and suggestions for further research are discussed.

Key Words: Diversity, Discrimination, Affirmative Action

A new social phenomenon has emerged in the United States (U.S.) during the 1990s involving White males who feel alienated, frustrated, and angry. The phenomenon is sometimes referred to as "White male backlash" and the individuals referred to as "worried" or "angry" White males. Although there has been coverage of the phenomenon in the popular press (Reeves, 1995; Yang, 1996), this phenomenon has not been adequately studied through empirical research. Specifically, there has not been any research describing the White male backlash (WMB) phenomenon or identifying its impact on the workplace. This was a study to generate empirical evidence on the WMB phenomenon.

Background

The U.S. has undeniably experienced substantial change during the last decade of the 20th Century. In discussing the impact of societal change on the workplace, many authors promote anticipation of rapid change as the norm (Drucker, 1989; Engels, 1995). Downsizing, increased globalization, deregulation, outsourcing, technological change, mergers, and acquisitions have created an environmental context for job transition (Gysbers, Heppner, & Johnston, 1998). Downsizing and a tendency for flatter organizations have meant there are fewer middle management positions, leaving diminished opportunities for steady career progression. The popular press has boldly proclaimed "the end of jobs" (Barnet, 1993; Bridges, 1994). Competition for the limited number of advancement opportunities has intensified (Yang, 1996). Traditional career assumptions no longer hold true (Hall, 1992). All indicators suggest that corporate restructuring and job loss are likely to continue in the near future (Eby & Buch, 1995).

Concurrently, the U.S. workplace has been affected by substantial demographic and societal shifts (Johnston & Packer, 1987). Their *Workforce 2000* study suggests that 60% of new entrants to the workplace will be minorities by the year 2000. The workforce is also growing older, with the majority of baby boomers now in middle age. Later retirement has caused career progression bottlenecks in many organizations (Leibowitz, Farren, & Kaye, 1986). Gender representation in the workplace has increased (Rifkin, 1994). The increased presence of women has marked a shift in workplace power dynamics and changed the traditional patriarchal hierarchy. There have also been changes in workplace social dynamics as increasing numbers of women and minorities have entered the workplace and advanced to mid- and senior-level management positions (Johnston & Packer, 1987). Changes in society in general, and in the workplace in particular, have caused many employees to reassess conventional workplace "rules" (Kotter, 1995).

The WMB phenomenon has emerged amidst these changes in the contemporary work environment. While societal and workplace changes have affected all individuals, they have particularly affected males (Faludi, 1999). Faludi describes the phenomenon as a "male crisis" (p. 50). Birkenstein (1999) narrows the population to White males by noting that "we have a parade of White males who appear to feel that simply being a White male should still entitle them to certain benefits... This is the true and sick sense of disenfranchisement some men feel, which we must deal with if we are to begin to understand this ongoing problem" (p. 18). Other research has shown that

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White males' commitment, self-esteem, and attachment to work has diminished as the workplace has become more diverse in terms of race and gender (Rifkin, 1994).

There is the suggestion that the WMB phenomenon has surfaced in response to Federally-mandated affirmative action (AA) programs (Faludi, 1991; Hoppe, 1996; Reeves, 1995; Yang, 1996) and formalized corporate diversity initiatives (Galen & Palmer, 1994; Rifkin, 1994; Whittenburg, 1999). The growing societal demand for "political correctness" in the workplace has been met with increased resistance. Studies on differences in the attitudes of specific demographic groups have shown White males' attitudes toward AA and diversity programs is significantly lower than that of other groups (Konrad & Linnehan, 1999; Lobel, 1999). What remains to be explored is the impact that White males' attitudes, as exemplified by WMB, is having on the workplace.

There may be other reasons for the distress experienced by White males. "[F]eelings of distress can be attributed to failures and deficiencies in coping with environmental demands as well as the experiences of personal failure and inadequacy which the individual sees as permanent. Lack of control over changes in the environment, real or fantasized dangers, humiliations, or loss of status are some examples" (Kets de Vries, 1995, p. 45). White males have counted on the traditional expectation that hard work pays off in steady career path progression, yet the danger is that career progression is no longer assured. Add to this the White males' perception that women and minorities are getting ahead due to AA programs and the situation is primed for a reaction from those White males who feel disenfranchised. Perceiving AA programs as unfair, some White males feel frustrated, alienated, and angry. "To be a White male in this organization means that I can kiss any chance of promotion good-bye," is a frequent lament, regardless of the statement's validity. Perceptions of humiliation or loss of status may follow.

Problem Statement

The general lack of empirical research on the WMB phenomenon and its impact on the workplace is problematic. Studies have shown White males' attitude toward AA programs is significantly lower than that of other demographic groups (see Bobo & Kluegel, 1993; Konrad & Linnehan, 1999). Lobel (1999) reports the same sentiments toward workplace diversity programs. What remains to be explored is the impact of White males' attitudes, as exemplified by White male backlash, on individual and organizational effectiveness. Rifkin (1994) suggests that if we do not help White males adjust to a diverse workforce, they will disengage, thereby compromising the desired benefit of diversity. Unfortunately, although anecdotal information and personal communications suggest the phenomenon is occurring and having a negative impact on individuals and work groups, there has been a paucity of empirical evidence documenting the phenomenon. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to provide empirical evidence describing WMB and its impact on the workplace in general, and on organizational effectiveness in particular.

In discussing the purpose for this study with fellow researchers, some could not see the need for studying the White male population. Their argument comes from the radical humanist paradigm focusing on the emancipation and empowerment of the alienated by raising consciousness (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). The intimation was that White males have traditionally been those with the power, so there should be no need to emancipate or empower them. Curiously, the argument was, "Why bother studying them?" This argument appears shortsighted. Although we are living in an increasingly pluralistic world, White males still account for the critical mass of the U.S. civilian labor force. It seems irresponsible to *not* learn more about the WMB phenomenon and its impact on the workplace.

Theoretical Framework

Sidanius and Pratto's (1999) social dominance theory (SDT) served as the theoretical framework for this study. SDT synthesizes political attitude and public opinion research with Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, and Sanford's (1950) authoritarian personality theory, Rokeach's (1979) two-value theory of political behavior, Blumer's (1960) group positions theory, and Tajfel and Turner's (1986) social identity theory, among others. Social identity theory, in particular, provided the basis for examining the relationship between demographic group membership and values, beliefs, and experiences that effect attitude. The two constructs for this study were attitude and organizational effectiveness. The variable for attitude, the dependent variable, was the perception of the WMB phenomenon. Organizational effectiveness was a second dependent variable, identified as perception of

a workplace problem connected to the WMB phenomenon. The proposition was that the WMB phenomenon is a workplace problem that detrimentally impacts organizational effectiveness.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to describe the WMB phenomenon and to see if there is a perceived link between the phenomenon and organizational effectiveness. This is a descriptive, exploratory study designed to provide empirical evidence on the phenomenon. The primary research question for this study was: What is WMB? Secondary research questions included: How common is this phenomenon in the U.S. workplace? How does the phenomenon play out in the workplace? Is it seen as an organizational problem? Does it impact organizational effectiveness?

Research Methods

Because of the exploratory nature and broad scope of this study, a combined qualitative and quantitative research design was used. Creswell (1994) recommends this approach as complimentary, allowing overlapping and differing facets of the phenomenon to emerge. The following sections provide information on the research setting, respondents, data collection, and data analysis.

Research Setting and Respondents

The research setting was the contemporary U.S. workplace. Although the data was generated from individual respondents, the level of analysis was the organization. A variety of public sector agencies (e.g., scientific, research, intelligence, defense) and private sector organizations (e.g., telecommunications, transportation, consulting, retail, healthcare) were included, to maximize the variation in the setting.

Firestone (1987) notes that "reality is socially constructed through individual or collective definitions of the situation" (p. 16). This antipositivist ontological perspective was appropriate for looking at the individual and collective realities of the WMB phenomenon. Reality is subjective and at the same time multiple, as experienced and seen by the individual (Creswell, 1998). This philosophical assumption had implications for the choice of study respondents. Maxwell (1996) suggests that respondents should be purposefully chosen among those who can most thoroughly inform about the issue under study and who can answer the research question. The respondents for this study were purposefully chosen using occupation as the criterion. Based on their perceived ability to answer the research questions and provide information-rich data, respondents included HR professionals, EEO and AA program officers, diversity program managers, and other related practitioners. An attempt was made to maximize the variation in race and gender of the informants.

Data Collection and Analysis

Because there was no existing instrument for examining the WMB phenomenon, a structured survey instrument was developed by the researcher. Independent variables included 'organization,' 'race,' 'gender,' and 'occupation.' These independent variables were also transformed to produce the two additional independent variables of 'White males' and 'women and minorities.' Dependent variables included two nominal response questions (Have you heard of the phenomenon of WMB occurring in the workplace in response to AA programs and diversity programs? Have you had direct workplace experience with the phenomenon?). Dependent variables also included two rated questions (Strongly disagree, Disagree, Don't know, Agree, Strongly agree response to the statements: 'WMB is a workplace problem' and 'WMB is a problem in my organization'). Qualitative data was generated from five open-ended questions. This combined quantitative and qualitative approach helped generate complimentary data, and allowed for the discovery and generation of possible hypotheses for further research.

The survey instruments were administered through e-mail and face-to-face to 76 contacts. The contacts were encouraged to forward the survey instrument to others who met the occupational criterion for respondents, helping to maximize the collection of data. The survey instrument informed respondents of the intended use of the data and the value of their participation in the study, along with assurances for the confidentiality of the informants and

their employers. Computer-based statistical software yielded frequencies and crosstabulations for the key variable. Data analysis also included reviewing the qualitative data provided by the completed open-ended questions to generate themes in the findings and assertions.

Findings

There were 45 usable responses, with 26 (57.8%) received through e-mail, two (4.4%) through U.S. Postal Service, and 17 (37.8%) through face-to-face contact. Eighteen (40.0%) were from private sector organizations. Twenty-seven (60.0%) were from public sector agencies. Nearly all the organizations were large (i.e., greater than 1,000 employees). Gender demographics included 21 (46.7%) males and 24 (53.3%) females. Because of the assumed connection between WMB, EEO legislation, and Federally-mandated AA programs, the survey used legally-defined terminology for race. Respondents included 25 (55.6%) White, 17 (37.8%) Black/African American, two (4.4%) Hispanic, and one (2.2%) "other" who self-identified as minority. Twenty-five (55.6%) were human resource professionals, including human resource management and human resource development functional specialists. Respondents also included five (11.1%) EEO and AA officers, seven (15.6%) diversity program managers, and eight (17.7%) "other" practitioner occupations (e.g., mentoring program manager, internal OD consultant).

Variable factor	Had heard about WMB	Had direct experience with WMB	Agreed/ strongly agreed WMB is a workplace problem	Agreed/ strongly agreed WMB is a problem in their organization
Private sector	61.1%	22.2%	22.2%	5.6%
Public sector	74.1	48.1	51.8	40.7
White	68.0	36.0	40.0	32.0
Black/African American	70.6	41.2	41.2	17.7
Hispanic	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Male	71.4	33.3	33.3	23.8
Female	66.7	41.7	45.8	29.1
White males	69.2	30.8	38.5	23.1
Women and minorities	68.8	40.6	40.7	28.2
HR professionals	64.0	24.0	32.0	16.0
EEO/AE officers	60.0	40.0	40.0	20.0
Diversity program managers	85.7	85.7	71.5	71.5
All respondents	68.9	37.8	40.0	26.7

Table 1. Summary of crosstabulation for key variables.

Table 1 provides a summary of the crosstabulation results by variable factor. For example, 61.1% of the private sector respondents had heard about WMB, versus 74.1% of the public sector respondents. Nearly 70% of all respondents had heard about WMB. Thirty (66.7%) respondents provided a comment defining WMB. Twenty-nine (64.4%) respondents provided a comment on the workplace impact of WMB. Eighteen (40.0%) respondents provided a comment describing their personal experience with the WMB phenomenon. Eighteen (40.0%) respondents agreed with the statement 'White male backlash is a workplace problem.' Six (13.3%) disagreed. Twenty-one (46.6%) did not know or did not respond. Thirty-seven (82.2%) respondents provided a comment about their response to this question. Twelve (26.7%) respondents agreed with the statement 'White male backlash is a problem in my organization.' Eighteen (40.0%) disagreed. Fifteen (33.4%) did not know or did not respond. Thirty-four (75.6%) respondents provided a comment about their response to this question.

Discussion

The descriptive respondent comments confirmed that WMB is the manifestation of some White males' reaction (i.e., attitude) toward factors that are upsetting the traditional social dominance of White males. The factors that are changing the taken for granted social hierarchy and power structure are varied. The three factors cited most consistently by respondents were Federal equal opportunity legislation, Federally-mandated AA efforts, and workplace diversity programs. Other factors cited by the participants included the changing workforce demographics (e.g., more women and minorities in the workplace), the need for continuous learning and skill development, and changing organizational structures (e.g., downsized, flatter, limited headroom, increased competition for jobs).

Bobo and Kluegel (1993) identify self-interest, stratification ideology, and racial attitudes as three factors that generate opposition to race targeting (e.g., AA programs). Self-interest may be the more substantial motivator for a negative reaction against programs that are perceived as 'not for me" (Sears & Funk, 1990). The WMB phenomenon appears to be an issue more of self-interest, rather than stratification ideology or racism. Konrad & Linnehan (1999) suggest that 'it is easier in contemporary society to develop socially acceptable arguments for opposition to a specific government policy than to justify racist sentiments" (p. 448). At the same time, the data from this study show that White males who oppose government-promoted AA and diversity programs are not necessarily perceived as racist even if they are seen as harbingers of WMB. Not all White males are racists. Not all White males exhibit WMB. Not all White males who demonstrate WMB are racist.

"When a man does not understand a thing, he feels discord with himself: he seeks causes for his dissonance not in himself, but outside himself, and the result is war with something he does not understand" (Chekhov, 1973, p. 278). WMB is a symptom of this war. The data show that WMB is evidence of some White males' reaction to societal and workplace change, and that the reaction is largely negative. Examples of the White males' dissonance include the perception that 'the system" is unfair, the perception that promotions and other employment opportunities given to women and minorities are not tied to merit or performance, the unspoken upheaval in the White males' traditional sense of entitlement, and their desire for a return to 'the way things used to be." The ontological assumption is that White males who exhibit WMB appear to be constructing their own reality based on their perception that women and minorities are getting an unfair advantage in employment opportunities, resulting in a loss of employment opportunities for White males. This is the White males' perception, even though the data from respondents indicate the White males' perception is largely inaccurate.

Both qualitative and quantitative data show that WMB is known as an issue in the contemporary workplace and is perceived as an organizational problem. There appears to be a considerable sense that the phenomenon is having a negative impact on the workplace, with 40% of respondents saying it is a workplace problem and nearly 27% saying it is a problem in their organization. On the other hand, description of what WMB looks like and its impact on the workplace varies widely from inactive expressions of negative attitude (e.g., 'griping,' resentment, apathy) to active behaviors (e.g., creating conflict in work relationships, detrimentally effecting organizational mission accomplishment, outright hostility, sabotage). In many instances, respondents identified that WMB is detrimental to organizational effectiveness. Respondents cited examples of underground newsletters, e-mail discussion groups, and anonymous letters generated by angry White males. In all instances, the impact of the phenomenon was described as negative, draining energies away from effectively accomplishing the organizational mission.

Although the WMB phenomenon is evident in both private and public sector organizations, it is more readily perceived in the public sector. The data suggests that this may be due to several factors. Namely, employment in the private sector is seen as more competitive based on merit, as compared to race or gender. Some respondents explained that workforce demographics, promotion information, and controversial issues are generally not discussed openly in the private sector workplace. Also, although the number of private sector organizations with diversity programs is growing, many do not have internal EEO officers and only those organizations with a government contract are required to have an AA program. Conversely, all public sector organizations have EEO and AA programs and program staffs. They also are more likely to have formalized diversity programs due to the Presidential management directive on diversity. Demographic and promotion information is readily available in public sector organizations, supporting more open discussion and debate.

Although both male and female respondents saw the phenomenon as a workplace problem, it was more readily perceived as a problem by females. Interestingly, compared to Black/African American respondents, more White respondents saw WMB as a problem in their organization though White respondents had nominally less direct experience with WMB. Also, the responses of White male respondents as a population subgroup were not substantially different from the responses of the population subgroup of women and minority respondents.

Diversity program managers were more likely than EEO/AE officers to have heard about WMB, had direct experience with WMB, agreed that WMB is a workplace problem, and agreed that WMB is a problem in their organization. In turn, EEO/AE officers were more likely than HR professionals to have heard about WMB, had direct experience with WMB, agreed that WMB is a workplace problem, and agreed that WMB is a problem in their organization. As a population, diversity program managers also completed more open-ended survey questions and tended to be more descriptive in their comments. The differences in perceptions of these occupational groups may be due to their functional or program mission. Diversity program managers are charged with addressing broad issues affecting employee morale, whereas the focus of EEO and AA officers is largely limited to policy development, complaint processing, and special emphasis programming for underrepresented groups (i.e., women and minorities rather than White males). The focus of HR professionals is generally limited to their functional specialty (e.g., staffing, compensation, training) and have a macro focus on the organization, rather than a micro focus on the needs of specific employee populations (e.g., White males).

A number of respondent comments seemed especially peculiar, given who the specific respondents were and where they work. One example was the way in which some private sector HR professionals vociferously denied that WMB is an issue in their organization because due to sound HR practices which do not allow WMB to occur. The intimation was that having policies, procedures, and practices in place would eliminate any negative reaction to employment decisions. Another peculiar response came from the White female who responded that WMB is a hoax perpetrated by White males and not a real problem in corporate America. Yet another strange response came from a public sector White male who stated that he had not heard of WMB. What is peculiar is that he works in an EEO office that co-sponsored an agencywide White Male Issue Study Group that identified WMB as a major organizational issue. The respondent's comment may indicate he is out of touch with what is going on in his office and organization. On the other hand, it may be based on other factors such as denial or fear of reprisal.

Follow-up personal communications with another respondent from the same public sector agency, showed that the White Male Issue Study Group's internal 'administrative use only' report concluded that:

> "[T]he agency's White male problem includes White male backlash. We believe there are a small but significant number of White male employees who are extraordinarily angry... . The negative impact of this anger on the productivity of these men and the people around them is, in the group's view, substantial. But the problem goes far beyond backlash. We believe there are much larger numbers of White males who ... are to one degree or another disaffected, disillusioned, disheartened and confused. This is a far more subtle problem, and yet in our view the cumulative energy diverted by the issue from accomplishing the mission of the organization is considerable."

A number of respondents commented about WMB under present environmental conditions (e.g., economic prosperity, organizational growth) versus in the future. While WMB was not currently perceived as a problem in their organization, the implication was that continued changes in workforce demographics and recessionary economic times would force the issue into the limelight.

Conclusions

This study attempted to describe the issue of the WMB phenomenon and its impact on the contemporary workplace. It in no way suggests that the WMB phenomenon should displace other issues of race and gender already evident in research and practice— chiefly, the history of discrimination against women and minorities. The data suggest, however, that White males are just as susceptible to self-interest perceptions of inequity and discrimination, and that their perceptions can be manifest in negative attitude and behaviors, such as WMB, that are detrimental to organizational effectiveness. White males remain the largest percentage of the American workforce. In large part, they also continue to hold positions of power and influence. The results of this exploratory study provide an imperative for understanding and addressing the WMB phenomenon, not only due to its own merits, but also because of its interdependence with the ultimate resolution of many other race and gender issues.

Contribution to New Knowledge

The results of this study provide data to describe and enhance understanding of the White male backlash phenomenon. Understanding the WMB phenomenon is important for both theoretical and practical reasons. For

theory, this study provides empirical research on the WMB phenomenon. Konrad and Spitz (1999) suggest that "it is important to move beyond the treatment of demographics as either proxies for theoretical constructs or sources of error variance that must be controlled.... [R]esearch must identify the theoretical reasons why demographic groups are expected to differ and incorporate measures of the relevant theoretical constructs" (p. 4). In this regard, this research contributed to social dominance theory and, in particular, social identity theory.

For practice, the results of this study are useful for HR practitioners who must address the collective and individual needs of employees, including White males. Engels (1995) calls out the need for the "identification of general and specific implications for theory and practice working with humans of all ages and stages of career development, especially in terms of preventive strategies" (p. 84). Lack of career development appears to be a significant factor in WMB. Where White males who feel disenfranchised exhibit symptoms of WMB, HR practitioners must develop strategies for ensuring that any dysfunctional aspects of the phenomenon are minimized. "As Americans deal with the reality of the shortened corporate ladder and organizations grapple with ethical and logistical issues in downsizing, the identification of factors that foster career growth ... are critical for individual and organizational survival" (Eby & Buch, 1995, p. 41). In theses times of rapid change, promoting career growth is as crucial for organizations, as it is for individuals (Engels, 1995). Also, the results of this study provide insights to supervisors who have to select for limited advancement opportunities, who are charged with creating other developmental opportunities, and who have the most direct opportunity to positively influence White males who are evidencing WMB.

Limitations and Future Research

This was an exploratory study about a social phenomenon, not a study about the experiences of White males. It was a preliminary sensing study examining the practitioners' concept of the WMB phenomenon and identifying their direct experience with it. It was limited by sampling methods. Respondents were purposely chosen using an occupational criterion (e.g., HR professionals, EEO and AA officers, diversity program managers), thereby limiting the generalizability of the findings. The assumption was the respondents would be informed enough to answer the research question. On the other hand, given their occupation, it could be seen as their self-interest to identify the WMB phenomenon as a problem. This study was also limited by the data shared by the informants based on their occupation, rather than their race or gender. The data, then, reflects perceptions of "others" about the WMB phenomenon.

The study was also limited by data collection methods. E-mail and face-to-face data collection methods may have influenced responses in that some respondents may have had concerns over confidentiality, attribution, and potential for reprisal. E-mail data collection was also limited in that there was no mechanism for verification of demographic information (e.g., race, gender). Also, information on the validity and reliability of the data collection survey instrument completed by the respondents was not available.

Although the data from this pilot effort does have limited generalizability, a more comprehensive effort with a larger sample size and greater statistical rigor is warranted. A larger sample size would improve the results in future research on the WMB phenomenon. Efforts should be made to ensure that the sample is representative of all demographic groups (e.g., Asian/Pacific Islanders, Native Americans), given that research has shown that demographic groups differ in their perceptions of EEO, AA, and other equity issues (see Bobo & Kluegel, 1993; Konrad & Linnehan, 1999; Steeh & Krysan, 1996). A survey instrument with more substantial quantitative questions could examine the forms WMB takes (i.e., how it is manifest, observed), perceptions versus actual experiences or behaviors, complaint activity or other outcomes as a result of WMB, and other relevant aspects. Statistical evidence on the relationship between WMB and self-interest, stratification ideology, and racial attitudes would be helpful. Lastly, what remains to be directly explored are the perceptions of the general population of White males about and experiences with the WMB phenomenon.

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